D. Environmental Analysis

D.1 Introduction

D.1.1 Contents of Section D

This section examines the environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Project and the alternatives to it. Section D includes analyses of the 13 environmental issue areas listed below:

- D.2 Pipeline Safety and Risk of Accidents
- D.3 Air Quality
- D.4 Biological Resources
- D.5 Cultural Resources
- D.6 Environmental Contamination & Hazardous Materials
- D.7 Geology, Soils, and Paleontology
- D.8 Hydrology and Water Quality
- D.9 Land Use, Public Recreation & Special Interest Areas
- D.10 Noise
- D.11 Utilities and Service Systems
- D.12 Transportation and Traffic
- D.13 Recreational and Commercial Fisheries
- D.14 Environmental Justice

Within each issue area, the Proposed Project and alternatives are addressed in the following order:

- Environmental Baseline
- Applicable Regulations, Plans, and Standards
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Proposed Project
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures for the Existing Pipeline ROW Alternative
- Environmental Impacts of the No Project Alternative

Section F presents Mitigation Monitoring Program tables for each environmental discipline. By identifying the impacts associated with each issue area and the offsetting mitigation measures, the regulatory agencies and the general public are offered a discussion and full disclosure of the significant environmental impacts of this Proposed Project and its alternatives.

D.1.2 Assessment Methodology

D.1.2.1 Environmental Baseline

In Section D, the analysis within each issue area begins with an examination of the existing physical or baseline setting wherein the Proposed Project would be placed. The 70.7-mile pipeline system is divided into seven separate segments (based on geographic, land use, or jurisdictional consistency) for ease of description and analysis. The pipeline segments are illustrated on Figure D-1. Segment 1 includes the analysis of Phase 1 and Phase 2 Carquinez Strait Crossings.

The regulatory setting, which includes applicable government rules, regulations, plans, and policies, is presented in the Applicable Regulations, Plans, and Standards section. For the purpose of this document, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, the baseline and regulatory settings used for the impact analysis reflect conditions at the time of issuance of the Notice of Preparation (February 2002).

D.1.2.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences (potential impacts) that would result from construction and operation of the Proposed Project and the alternatives are assessed in detail in each issue area's analysis. Mitigation measures for each impact are identified, where feasible, and the residual impact determined and stated. The analysis of impacts on the environment and specific resources is based on the description of the Proposed Project and the alternatives as defined in Section B of this document.

Significance Criteria. The impacts identified by applying the assessment methodology were then compared with specific significance criteria developed by the CSLC and presented in each section. Impacts were classified according to significance categories (see Section D.1.3 for discussion of significance categories). Feasible and effective mitigation measures are identified for each impact. Finally, the impacts found to be significant and unavoidable or unmitigable to a non-significant level were identified. The same methodology was applied systematically to the Existing Pipeline ROW Alternative.

Mitigation Measures. Once an impact was identified, diligent effort was taken to identify mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a level that is not significant. Since some reviewing agencies require a demonstration of reduction of impacts to the maximum extent possible, mitigation measures were identified for all classes of impacts (except beneficial impacts). The mitigation measures recommended by this study have been identified in the impact assessment sections and presented in a Mitigation Monitoring Program (in Section F).

Cumulative Analysis. The cumulative impact scenario is presented in Section E, in which a list and map are presented that identify other future projects in the vicinity of the Proposed Project. The analysis of cumulative impacts, representing the potential impacts of the Proposed Project taken together with potential impacts of other related projects in the same general area, is presented in each part of Section D. The focus in the cumulative impact analyses is to identify those project impacts that might not be significant when considered alone, but that might contribute to a significant impact when viewed in conjunction with future planned projects.

D.1.3 Impact Significance Categories

While the criteria for determining whether impacts are significant are unique to each issue area, the classification of the impacts is uniformly applied in this EIR in accordance with the following definitions:

Class I: Significant; cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
Class II: Significant; can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
Class III: Adverse, less than significant
Class IV: Beneficial impacts

Figure D-1. Overview of Proposed Pipeline Route
Color 8½x11

Second allowed page for color figure